

## Crossroads Community Church

Glorious Sunshine greeted us this lovely March morning and God met with us as we worshipped Him. Whether our week was filled with successes or discouragements, God is right by our sides. Pastor Don shared prayer requests; we praise the Lord for His power to heal and we pray for God's strength on those who are fighting illness that they would keep their hope in God and be relieved quickly. We ask God to heal many who are struggling with depression and loneliness in our community that He would send friendly neighbors and family to support them in their time of need. After delightful praise and worship Pastor Don shared an insightful message.

He prayed; ?Dear Lord let us be more like you and be humble to serve like you, in Jesus name Amen.? In today's life style, it can be quite difficult to be humble, culture pushes into the opposite direction, the latest fashions, new cars, tech gadgets, bigger homes, better jobs and the most success possible. Even in Christian realms, the best preacher, greatest biblical knowledge, the most attendance and popular programs can cause pride to take over. Even in Jesus' time it took place,( Matthew 23:1-3) and the Bible often warns us against pride and its consequences, ?Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall,? Proverbs 16:18. Jesus warned us because the problem with pride is it is seldom recognized within ourselves just as the teachers of the law couldn't see it. Of course a little pat on the back and a little praise help to motivate us but it should not be our goal rather it should be to humbly help others, knowing that we helped is reward enough. Pride makes us self-centered and sets us against God, ?God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble,? James 4:6. Pride always has dire consequences and pride is never satisfied,(Leviticus 26:18-19). Pride opposes godly counsel, causes us to be self-reliant and forget to be grateful for what God has done,(Psalm 10:4, Deuteronomy 8:14).

So to remove pride, it is necessary humbly ask God to reveal it to us and to recognize it, then confess it and repent from it. A great example of this is when Jesus warned Peter, He knew Peter's heart but pride was in the way so Jesus had already prayed for Peter's repentance in Luke 22:31-33. In our pride it is easy to make promises we are probably unable to fulfill but God knows our feeble hearts and provides a way for us to turn from pride. He is our confidence, a healthy self- esteem should be based on God's strength not our own, this is important because many of us are crippled by low self-esteem inflicted by pride of others and even ourselves. The Apostle Paul writes a good approach to others, ?Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us,? Romans 12:3.

The Bible is full of worthy advice on humility and honor,(Proverbs 29:23). The Characteristics of humility can only be achieved with God, we need His eyes so we can see ourselves as He sees us, nothing more and nothing less, we are sinners saved from death by His grace ,we are His children whom He loves, we are His for we were bought at a great price.

I believe that makes us pretty special and valuable in His estimation, all the more reason to keep a humble spirit before God. We need Jesus to accomplish anything good in our lives and in the lives of others, Jesus told us we needed him in John 15:5, and Paul knew this too,( Romans 7:18-20 Philippians 4:13). Another sign that we possess godly humility is in the way we treat others, treating them in higher regards than ourselves, think J.O.Y.; Jesus first, Others second, Yourself last. Putting Jesus first is a precursor to putting others before ourselves because Jesus being the most humble person who ever lived enables us to. He was the perfect portrait of humility,(Philippians 2:3-8). When we stop to consider how much Jesus the Son of God gave up in obedience to His Father, humbly becoming one of us and suffering the humiliation and death of a criminal for our salvation, only then can we understand what humility is and appropriate it. It is He who helps us become humble, and there is no greater honor, for even God elevated Jesus above all only after He humbled himself,( Philippians 2:9-11).

Beloved if God did this only after Jesus humbled himself we can safely assume that He expects this humility from us too. Great humility resides inside each of us when Jesus is on the throne of our hearts and we need to release it in kind and respectful service unto others. However Humility is refined through adversity, tough times humble us, helps us sympathize with others and become compassionate while we take the back seat to Jesus as he strengthens us for all to see. When God sees pride in our lives He will allow humbling experiences to help us see He is all we need; just as the thorn in Paul's side kept him humble not wanting to boast, not wanting any praise directed at him to replace the honor due to Christ Jesus,(2Corinthians 12:6-9). So this week when you need Him don't let pride keep you from asking Him for help and when someone needs help, do it all the while pointing them to Jesus by

giving Him the honor and praise for whoever exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.?  
Have a blessed week with Him, Asherey Shalom!